

Message Text

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E. O. 11652 N/ A

TAGS: ELAB, ETRN, FR

SUBJECT: AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER AGAIN THREATEN STRIKE

1. . SUMMARY AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS UNION OF CFTC, WHICH MOST MODERATE GROUP IN FRENCH LABOR MOVEMENT, ANNOUNCED OVER WEEKEND THEIR INTENT TO RESUME STRIKE WHICH ENDED LAST MARCH. ORIGINAL ANNOUNCEMENT SPOKE OF 23 MAY AS DATE OF STRIKE, BUT SUBSEQUENTLY MODIFIED LEAVING DATE OF STRIKE TO BE SET LATERM. END SUMMARY.

2. THREAT OF STRIKE FOLLOWS UNSUCCESSFUL EFFRTS MADE BY UNION TO OBTAIN RELIEF FROM SEVERE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT AGAINST UNION FOR HAVING ENGAGED IN UNLAWFUL STRIKE FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20. PENALTIES INCLUDE SEVEN DISMISSALS, 28 TRANSFERS, AND ABOUT 350 WRITTEN REPRIMANDS. ACCORDING TO CIVIL SERVICE RULES, REPRIMAND EMPLOYEES ARE DEPRIVED FOR FIVE YEARS OF RIGHT TO RUN FOR ELECTIONS IN MIXED CIVIL SERVICE COMMITTEES. TFTC ARGUES T AT, IN VIEW OF LARGE NUMBER OF REPRIMANDS INVOLVED, UNION WILL BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRATICALLY OUT OF BUSINESS.

3. CFTC LEADERS, BOTH AT CONTROLLER UNION LEVEL AND AT NATIONAL CONFEDERAL LEVEL, ARE BITTER BECAUSE THEY FEEL THAT GOVERNMENT UNJUSTLY PICKED CFTC TO SET AN EXAMPLE OF STRICK ENFORCEMENT OF LWA AND ORDER. THEY ARGUED THAT, INSTEAD, GOF SHULD HAVE PICKED ONE OF THE FREQUENTLY- OCCURRING ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF FACTORIES (AND SEQUESTRATION OF MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVES) BY CFDT AND CGT UNIONS IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE THIS APPARENT RESOLVE TO UPHOLD ENERGETICALLY THE LAW.

4. UNION OFFICIALS, ACCOMPANIED BY CFTC NATIONAL LEADERS, MADE FOREGOING POINTS TO PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION BUT NEITHER OF THEM GAVE CONTROLLERS ANY REASON TO HOPE THAT GOF MIGHT RELENT.

5. CFTC SECRETARY GENERAL TOLD LABATT THAT HE TOO HOPES THAT THE CONTROLLERS THREAT OF STRIKE IS PART OF THE PRESSURE TACTICS UNION FEELS IT MUST APPLY TO OBTAIN FROM GOF A RECONSIDERATION OF THE FOREGOING PENALTIES. HE AGREED THAT TIMING OF ANNOUNCEMENT WAS PROBABLY DETERMINED BY OPENING OF AIR SHOW AND GOF INTEREST IN ITS SUCCESS. HE DID NOT RULE OUT, HOWEVER, THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE CFTC AIR CONTROLLERS IN THEIR DESPERATION MAY FIND THEMSELVES COMPELLED TO CARRY OUT THEIR THREAT. HE CALLED ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT THE CONTROLLERS HAVE SET UP A FUND TO WHICH CONTRIBUTIONS MUST BE PAID FOR THE PAYMENT OF THE SALARIES OF THE SEVEN DISMISSED. THIS OBVIOUSLY A SITUATION WHICH COULD NOT CONTINUE FOR LONG TIME.

6. COMMENT: INDEED THE UNION WILL BE ILL- ADVISED TO REPEAT THE TACTICAL ERROR IT COMMITTED IN FEBRUARY WHEN IT ALLOWED THE STRIKE TO CONTINUE FOR 30 DAYS TYING UP TRAFFIC AND CAUSING SEVERE LOSSES TO AIR TRANSPORT INDUSTRY. IN ADDITION TO GOF' S DETERMINATION TO SHOW FIRMNESS, THE CFTC IS SEVERELY HANDICAPPED BY FACT THAT NEITHER CGT NOR CFDT IS LIKELY TO SUPPORT A CFTC STRIKE.

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7. GOF PROBABLY REGRETS THAT CFTC IS SERVING AS EXAMPLE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT BUT IT CAN JUSTLY CLAIM THAT THE CFTC CONTROLLERS ASKED FOR IT.

DECONTROL FOLLOWING MAY 21, 1974.
IRWIN

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